

Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France and a selection of things to see and do

A New Year Resolution?

Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful

Wishing you all a very prosperous and healthy



Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area [\pm = stalls expected; '61' = area]

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|--|-----------------------|--|
| W/e 14 th /15 th | Le Teilleul (50) | <i>brocante</i> in huge ex-furniture warehouse, on the road towards Domfront: bric-a-brac, furniture, clothes, books, etc., all at give-away prices. |
| Sun. 15 th | Bellou-en-Houlme (61) | v-g / <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, \pm 150 |
| Sat. 28 th | Craon (53) | <i>vide-maison</i> at 35 Chemin du Verger, \pm 50 |
| W/e 28/29 th | Le Molay-Littre (14) | <i>puces musicales</i> in the Salle des Fêtes, place du Marché, \pm 50 |

Visit www.brocabrac.fr and www.vide-greniers.org which are constantly updated with *brocantes / vide-greniers*, including any changes.

'La galette des rois' – a tasty tradition

A seasonal reminder that France celebrates Epiphany each year on the second Sunday after Christmas with the *galette des rois* – a traditional puff pastry cake filled with *frangipane*, a thick almond cream. This tradition traces its roots back to the Middle Ages when the last piece of the cake, often called the 'piece for the poor' was reserved and given to the first needy person knocking at the door. Inside is a little surprise – these days a *santon* (figurine) – and the person who gets the slice with *le santon* is declared the king and so crowned.

Eating out

This hotel/restaurant has been recommended to me by several people: *Hôtel l'Abbaye* in Neufbourg, (next to Mortain, 50) is English owned and they serve a very good 3-course *midi* for around 12,50€. Very popular with both French and English, so it's always a good idea to book (tel: 02 33 51 21 63). [I am not sure if they are open in January, so you may need to contact them to check that out].

An English choir in Saint-Siméon (61)

Kit Stephens belongs to the French choir in Passais, where their *directrice* is English and there is one other *anglaise*, Gail White. It was thought it might be fun to have a group of English people (not necessarily just ladies) who would like to meet once a week to sing for fun. No concerts, no language barriers, just to sing for pleasure. Gail has secured the blessing of the *Maire* of Saint-Siméon and the use of the premises, and it is planned that their first meeting will be on Wednesday 18th January at 14h in the Old Schoolhouse in Saint-Siméon. If you are interested, please call or e-mail either Lindsey (02 33 30 12 28; lindsay.shrubsole@gmail.com) or Gail (02 33 37 87 26; mrsnutter@hotmail.co.uk).

Quiz Evening in support of CSF Nord

To start 2017 and to liven up the dark winter nights, Cancer Support France will be holding a Quiz at their Day Centre in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50) on the evening of Sat. 14th - at 19h for a prompt 19h30 start. Tickets are 10€, which includes a meal of Curry and Vanilla Cake with Red Fruits. (A vegetarian option is available – please request when booking). Please take your own drink and glasses. For more info, phone CSF on 02 33 69 01 05 or email: nord@cancersupportfrance.org

Art classes and workshops

If you have promised yourself some quality time this winter, art sessions in Joe Morgan's studio in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53) will offer you techniques, encouragement and creativity. Watercolours and Acrylics are available on Thursdays and Fridays. Sessions are two hours in duration and cost 12€. All abilities welcome. Call Joe on 02 43 13 06 72 for availability.

Grande-Daze Rescue 'Bric-a-Brac & Brunch Day'

On Sun. 29th from 9h30 to 15h30 this will be in the Salle des Fêtes in St Aubin-fosse-Louvain (53). Items for sale include clothes, toys, furniture, glassware, china and ornaments. Food will be available all day – including bacon rolls, beans on toast, sausage sandwiches, egg, bacon, sausage & beans; cream teas, tea, coffee and soft drinks.

‘So Frip’ - a new friperie - opens in Laval (53)

L'Association des Paralysés de France are opening a new second-hand clothes shop beside their offices at 53 Allée de Mettman in Laval, in support of the charity. All donated clothing will be on sale at prices from 2€ to 15€. *l'Association* office is open from Mon. to Fri., 9h–12h & 14h–17h, and the ‘*So Frip*’ shop will be opening just in the afternoons initially, with longer hours hopefully in the future.

New Phoenix Singles/Social Group

Here is a message from John Barnes: Life on your own in rural France can be very lonely, however you find yourself becoming single. Help is at hand - a new Singles Group catering primarily for the over 55s has just started and is looking for new members. The idea at first is to form a database of members and, when there are sufficient numbers, to organise an event, usually a meal somewhere, hopefully reasonably central to most people. There is no membership fee, only the cost of the event. Come on, don't be shy, give it a chance ! Please email your age, gender and location to phoenixsingles55@gmail.com

Introducing Keith Bush - Diagnostic Auto Electrician

Keith Bush has 45 years' experience in car electrics and mechanics. He prefers to work on older cars, but will do modern car electrics; he has diagnostic equipment and a ramp. Keith also does restoration work on older cars, including vintage and classic car re-wires. [Siret no: 813.901.618.00013]. Tel: 02 43 04 51 94.

Weekly markets - in the Orne (61)

By popular request, repeated here are some weekly markets:-

Day of the week	Location
Mondays	Briouze, Remalard, Vimoutiers (afternoon)
Tuesdays	Alençon, Athis de l'Orne, Bagnoles de l'Orne, Couterne, Argentan, l'Aigle, Passais-la-Conception.
Wednesdays	Bagnoles de l'Orne, Carrouges, Flers, Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe, Le Theil-sur-Huisne, Longny-au-Perche
Thursdays	Alençon, Ceaucé, La Ferté-Macé, Putanges-Pont-Ecrepin, Bellême, Bretoncelles, Trun, La Ferté-Fresnel
Fridays	Argentan, Domfront, Bagnoles de l'Orne, La Chapelle d'Andaine, Ecouché, Condé-sur-Huisne, Courtomer
Saturdays	Bagnoles de l'Orne, Flers, Gacé (afternoon), Tinchebray, Bertoncelles, Mortagne-au-Perche, Rânes
Sundays	Alençon, Argentan, Ceton, Courtomer, Mortrée

Next month: weekly markets in the Manche (50) region

Entertainment & Concerts

Fri. 20th at 20h30 in the Chapelle of the Lycée Ambroise Paré in Laval (53): Concert of classical music from the *Orchestre de Laval et de la Mayenne*. For more info: www.orchestre-de-laval-et-de-la-mayenne.fr

Sat. 21st at 20h30 in l’Espace Clair de Lune in Ernée (53): ‘Lalala Napoli: *Amore Sole Liberta*’: 8 musicians, with 2 accordions, flute, violin, bass, drums and electric guitar, promise an energetic evening of music from the Mediterranean and Central Europe. Tickets: 12€; reservations: 02 43 05 98 80. www.cc-lernee.fr and www.la-curieuse.com.

Thurs. 26th at 20h30 in ‘Les Ondines’, Place Christian d’Elva in Changé (53): ‘Clarika in Concert’ – folk and classical music and song. Tickets: 23€; tel: 02 43 53 34 42; www.culture-change53.fr

Two ‘Cantamus’ Concerts

The Cantamus Ladies Choir will be performing 2 concerts in January continuing their winter programme of seasonal music. Cantamus sing a mix of sacred and secular songs, some folk and jazz, and always some surprise pieces. Something for everyone:

♪ Sunday 8th at 15h30 in the church at Menil-Hermei (61). Entrance is free with a collection in support of church funds;

♪ Sunday 15th at 15h30 the Chapelle du Sacré-Coeur in Athis de l’Orne (61). Entrance is free with a collection in support of church funds.

For further information contact Lesley Thomson on 02 33 38 09 44, or by e-mail on les.paul@wanadoo.fr; more info also: www.chorale-cantamus.fr and on Facebook

English films in Gorrion – plus evening meal

The Cinema Committee in Gorrion is offering the possibility of a meal nearby before the film on cinema nights – for films shown on Mondays, food will be available in the *Bar de la Mairie* and for other nights of the week, also in the *Crêperie de la Menhir*. More details next month. [I have no details of the VO films this month – they are not yet showing on www.gorrion.fr]

Local names for the villagers

People who live in Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) are known as Amboriverains, and here are some others: (More next month):

If you live in	Château Gontier (53)	you are	Castrogontériens
“	Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)	you are	Lasséens
“	St Denis de Gastines (53)	you are	Dionysiens
“	Landivy (53)	you are	Landivysiens
“	Champagnéteux (53)	you are	Campagnéteusiens
“	Juvigné-sous-Andaine (61)	you are	Juvignasiens

Sport & Leisure Activities

Championnats de Cross Country (Cross Country Championships)

Sun. 8th from 12h these departmental championships take place in the *Parc des Sport et Loisirs* in Saint-James (50). Free entry. Food and drink are available on site. (www.saintjamestourisme.fr)

Walk (*randonnée pédestre*)

On Tues. 31st - a walk from Saint-James to St Benoit-des-Ondes (35, on the Bay de Mont Saint Michel) organised by *St James Randonne*. Depart at 14h from Place du Champ de Foire in Saint-James (50). 1,50€ for non-members. www.saintjamestourisme.fr



That's all for this month – traditionally, a quieter month (and also, I only returned from a holiday yesterday!) so fewer pages here than usual.

Please do feel free to let me know of any places visited, or restaurants that you have enjoyed, and think that others may also like to know about them.

Judy Skinner

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Events by the day (not including *vide-greniers*):

January 2017

Date	Event	Place	Page
Sun. 8 th	Cantamus concert	Menil-Hermei	4
“	Cross Country championships	Saint-James	5
Sat. 14 th	Quiz Evening in support of CSF	Notre-Dame du Touchet	2
Sun. 15 th	Cantamus concert	Athis de l’Orne	4
Wed. 18 th	Meeting of the English choir	Saint-Siméon	2
Fri. 20 th	Concert of classical music	Laval	4
Sat. 21 st	‘Lalala Napoli’ – 8 musicians	Ernée	4
Thurs. 26 th	‘Clarika’ in concert	Changé	4
Sun. 29 th	Grande-Daze Bric-a-Brac & Brunch	St Aubin-fosse-Louvain	3
Tues. 31 st	Walk from St James to St Benoit	Saint-James	5

Some more Tourist Office contact details to make a note of:-

Coutances (50)	www.tourisme-coutances.fr	02 33 19 08 10
Saint Malo (35)	www.saint-malo-tourisme.com	08 25 13 52 00
Flers (61)	www.ornetourisme.com	02 33 65 06 75
Vire (14)	www.normandie-tourisme.fr	02 31 66 28 50